



Over a Brew

26th May 2023,

**Right people in the right place,
with the right skills and at the
right time**

Introduction

The session was focused on recruitment and retention and covered behaviours, cultures, human connections, values. It included aspects on International Recruitment, Personal Assistants and Direct Payments.

The approach used includes :

Intentional space creation - Brave space to challenge and disagree, inclusion-diverse voices , self care , Camerados principles and 'Over a brew' break outs.

Real life stories - Shared with generosity and love

Time to listen, process and respond together.

Focus on **actionable learning and creating momentum for change**

Invitation to Brave Space

By Micky ScottBey Jones

Together we will create brave space

Because there is no such thing as a "safe space"

We exist in the real world

We all carry scars and we have all caused wounds.

In this space

We seek to turn down the volume of the outside world,

We amplify voices that fight to be heard elsewhere,

We call each other to more truth and love

We have the right to start somewhere and continue to grow.

We have the responsibility to examine what we think we know.

We will not be perfect.

This space will not be perfect.

It will not always be what we wish it to be

But

It will be our brave space together,

and

We will work on it side by side

CAMERADOS "6 Principles"

Be More
Human

- 1) No fixing, Just be alongside (and lots of tea)
- 2) Have Fun, makes things less scary
- 3) It's OK to disagree, respectfully
- 4) Mix with those who don't look like you
- 5) It's OK to Fail. We're all a bit rubbish sometimes.
- 6) If someone's struggling, ask them to help you.

'Over A Brew' guide



Grab a brew

Once you have your
brew, ask someone to
be the timer



Reflect

Each person has time to
think about the questions



Have your say

Each take it in turns to say
your response
(3mins each)



Use the rest of the time to
reflect on what's been said
(no fixing)

Try the Camerados principles



PRINCIPLE #1 If we see someone struggling...we ask them to help us.*

PRINCIPLE #2 No fixing each other's lives...we are just alongside each other.

PRINCIPLE #3 It's ok to be a bit rubbish...we share our failures without worrying.

PRINCIPLE #4 We mix with people...who don't look and think like us.

PRINCIPLE #5 Remember to have fun...it keeps things human.

PRINCIPLE #6 When we disagree...level with each other respectfully.

* Creates purpose, self-worth and gets people out of their own worries.

Still got some time?
Think about:

What's not been said?
What are your lasting
thoughts?



Learning from the Stories

Navigating the system

- *Feeling frustrated with the system, barriers and challenges is quite overwhelming and confrontation and assertiveness is really hard.*
- *The importance of 'hand-holding' when navigating the system is tough*

Learning together from experiences

- *When Direct Payments and PA recruitment works well, it makes such a difference.*
- *We need LAs to encourage DP users to come together as a network to share the good stuff and the challenges - we probably have the solutions between us*

Focus on relationships

- *"You have to deal with HR stuff one moment, and be showered by someone the next"*
- *Mostly it feels like a professional enemy not friend*
- *Treat people as humans*
- *99% of a good PA is down to personality*
- *It's values that makes a great PA not training!*
- *Matching eg PAs with the people they will work with*
- *Read people - understand how people feel and their surroundings*
- *'he can read me and know' PAs personality dependent*

Learning from the Stories

Honesty and willingness to engage and tackle barriers

- *This business about rates is a load of rubbish*
- *Not looking at the barriers - resulting in people being bounced round the system*
- *The importance of honesty from people in positions of power*
- *There are barriers to engagement*
- *The short term nature of engagement*
- *Barriers to engagement unsuitable and unhelpful to people in crisis feeling not listened to not heard and needs not met*
- *Spend longer on engagement & listening to people*
- *LAs need to give time to individuals - some people don't want to engage the first time - need to handhold/support people to engage.*

Help, training and advice for people who employ PAs or have Direct payments

- *Employment is difficult and complex*
- *DPs - more than being an employer - you are a manager too. Responsible for everything, without backup*
- *Being an employer isn't easy no one prepares you for being an employer*
- *Need for wider training for individual employers, conflict management etc*
- *People recruiting PAs may need more practical advice*
- *Is there a standard contract for individual employers to set out requirements and expectations*

Learning from the Stories

Payments

- *Varying PA rates not helpful or supporting skills*
- *Differing pay rates*
- *We are still being told there is no DP rate, it is down to the employer!!!! - really!*
- *2 tiered systems again*
- *Peoples rates of pay should be personalised too - depends on needs and requirements - its up to the DP holder really.*
- *Council not always aware of the range paid to PAs*
- *Some SW do want to know what your paying as this would show on invoices*
- *Might need to be varying rates given rurality of area support being delivered within or complexity of needs being supported?*
- *Makes me want to ask questions about who really controls the finance vs who should? Why are people with lived experience not more involved in setting rates of pay?*
- *Strain on the DP systems of wage increases were available in line with Cost of Living; no flexibility between local governments; glass ceiling to maximum payments and national government recognising this*

Learning from the Stories

Flexibility and freedom for the workforce

- *Our roles working in services should allow for creativity and friendship*
- *Individual employers are not respected - creativity is not encouraged or welcomed*
- *People working in services, providing care should be able to do whatever is right for the individual*

Equality /coproduction

- *Dont assume DP users are out to defraud the system - that is the last thing on their mind*
- *Staff high up are not engaged with the people accessing care and support but making decisions!*
- *SW on a fishing exercise*
- *Put yourself in other people's shoes - empathy matters*
- *The value of people with lived experience working with / supporting others in similar positions*
- *Treat people as people and individual - they are not profit/not a stat - their life matters*
- *We need to keep learning / relearning this because the message is repeated; we need to treat people as people as human beings*
- *Do we work enough with people to define what the role of social care is? Coproduced job roles for example?*

Other

- *Being Flexible*
- *'A professional friend'*
- *Disillusionment*

What kind of person would you want supporting you? Why?

- Someone who truly **understands me**, because it creates trust which is integral for any relationship
- You can't train people to have **good values it's something that's in their heart**
- Someone with **common sense**
- If people don't think that as a **disabled person we add value to our community** they will be totally unsuitable to work as a PA
- **Friendly and chatty but not intrusive into my personal business**
- Someone **I like**
- A good PA is exactly what a person wants
- **Good values EVERYONE is worthy, everyone brings something to the table, everyone has a right, everyone is human**
- **One size does not fit all - it has to be right for me**

What skills and qualities does this person need to have?

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- ☐ Someone who can help with organising, digesting, and understanding information.
- ☐ An advocate who listens, meets needs and helps me to speak up.
- ☐ Someone who has good values.
- ☐ Recognition that everyone is worthy and has a right to be here.
- ☐ Someone who brings something to the table.
- ☐ Makes no assumptions.
- ☐ Recognises that one size doesn't fit all.
- ☐ Gives the person being supported time to process information.
- ☐ Spends a lot of time helping to plan.
- ☐ Provides time for people to express themselves in whichever way they feel comfortable with
- ☐ Enables someone to live the life they want to

Challenges and barriers people would like considered:

- . Cost of living and lack of increase in salaries causing people to leave the sector and work in retail.
- . Not being able to be flexible in what we pay our Personal Assistants (who may well be supporting someone with complex needs)
- . There is a balance between values and having the right skills to be able to do the job.
- . Concerns about funding mandatory training and backfill of PA posts – PA's need to access skills and training, need to be confident and invested in
- . Better clarity around what skills, development and training is available to support Pas – what can people who provide support access?
- . In relation to International Recruitment – there is a concern about making sure people who are recruited have the right skills to do the job. We should link up providers with groups of people in social care who understand the skills needed.
- . International recruitment frightens people who access care and support.
- . People understanding autism and what that means for new recruits coming into the country.
- . Ensuring people recruited have a good experience and individuals who receive support have a good experience too.
- . Consider what behaviours a good PA would have.
- . Consider language barriers – difficult but can be overcome.
- . Mental Health advocacy important but many are not aware of this even though it is part of legislation.
- . Consider values-based recruitment for PAs – is there a group PAs can go to? [Support for individual employers and PAs \(skillsforcare.org.uk\)](https://skillsforcare.org.uk)
- . We need to set out clear expectations of values, behaviours and skills required for providers – what does a good PA look like?
- . Consider how we can benefit from someone living in a different country with a different culture.

Possible actions:

1. From the previous session - Assessment and Reviews – top tips (David)
2. Achieve better clarity about what support and training is available for Personal Assistants (refer to Skills for Care link - [Support for individual employers and PAs \(skillsforcare.org.uk\)](https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk) and encourage people to sign up. Shirley Way is the Eastern Skills for Care rep – we can always ask Shirley to come and provide a session in the East as part of the Regional Building Positive Futures Programme (Tash)
3. Consider what we think a good PA looks like and what behaviours we would expect, maybe in the form of a job profile (team to think about what this might look like) – (Curators of Change team)

Link to all notes [https://docs.google.c](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BArg/edit) [BArg/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BArg/edit)

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Learning from the stories

How do they make you feel?

What resonates?

What learning is there?

Barriers to engagement unsuitable and unhelpful to people in crisis feeling not listened to not heard and needs not met

strange of different rates of pay

When Direct Payments and PA recruitment works well, it makes such a difference

being an employer isn't easy no one prepares you for being an employer

99% of a good PA is down to personality

Do we work enough with people to define what the role of social care is? Coproduced job roles for example?

matching eg PAs with the people they will work with

Read people - understand how people feel and their surroundings

Mostly it feels like professional enemy not friend

Being Flexible

Varying PA rates not helpful or supporting skills

Employment is difficult and complex

Strain on the DP systems of wage increases were available in line with Cost of Living no flexibility between local governments glass ceiling to maximum payments and national government recognising this

People recruiting PAs may need more practical advice

we are still being told there is no DP rate it is down to the employer!!!! - really!

Council not always aware of the range paid to PAs

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Our roles working in services should allow for creativity and friendship

LAs need to give time to individuals - some people don't want to engage the first time - need to handhold/support people to engage

People working in services, providing care should be able to do whatever is right for the individual

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don't assume DP users are out to defraud the system - that is the last thing on their mind :(

Staff high up are not engaged with the people accessing care and support but making decisions!

we need LAs to encourage DP users to come together as a network to share the good stuff and the challenges - we probably have the solutions between us

Put yourself in other people's shoes - empathy matters

the value of people with lived experience working with / supporting others in similar positions

Treat people as people and individual - they are not profit/ not a stat - their life matters

The importance of 'hand-holding' when navigating the system is tough

Feeling frustrated with the system, barriers and challenges is quite overwhelming and confrontation and assertiveness is really hard

Is there a standard contract for individual employers to set out requirements and expectations

Need for wider training for individual employers, conflict management etc

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'A professional friend'

disillusionment

sw on a fishing exercise

"You have to deal with HR stuff one moment, and be showered by someone the next"

'he can read me and know' PAs personality dependent

DPs - more than being an employer - you are a manager too. Responsible for everything, without backup

the importance of honesty from people in positions of power

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not looking at the barriers - resulting in people being bounced round the system

the short term nature of engagement -

Some SW do want to know what your paying as this would show on invoices

its values that makes a great PA not training!

Treat people as humans

good values
EVERYONE is
worthy, everyone
brings something to
the table, everyone
has a right,
everyone is human

Someone I
like

***What kind of person would
you want supporting you?
Why?

One size
does not fit
all - it has to
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me

A good PA is
exactly what
a person
wants

you cant train
people to have
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if people dont think
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someone who
truly understands
me, because it
creates trust
which is integral
for any
relationship

Someone
with
common
sense

Friendly and
chatty but not
intrusive into
my personal
business

Skills: empathy,
laid back,
cheerful,
listening to and
advocate for
needs being met

**What skills and qualities
does this person need to have?

Organisational
skills needed
and valuing
human beings

A good
listener

someone to
support and
organise
things

it's not about
the training
they have had
its about the
values they
possess

thoughtful,
caring,
cheerful,
can do
attitude.

to help me
process
things

Skills -
driving,
cooking
healthily